

the litigation itself that endangers the program, not just the amount of money that might be awarded. Having the taxpayers in effect pay the plaintiffs' lawyers is not the kind of solution that is going to continue the program.

This is an area that cries out for bipartisanship, and that is exactly what happened in the Senate. By an overwhelming vote of 68 to 29, a substantial—I guess every single one of the 29 were Democrats—a significant number of Democrats, more than half, voted for this bipartisan bill. We know for a fact there are 21 Democrats in the House who support what the Senate did. If you add those 21 Democrats to the Republicans in the House, we know there is a bipartisan majority in the House of Representatives to pass the very same bill we passed in the Senate.

I keep hoping we will somehow, through this process, evolve the same kind of spirit that we were able to exhibit on a bipartisan basis in passing the economic stimulus package earlier in the year and that we exhibited last week on the housing bill, which presumably will pass tomorrow or Wednesday. So I have not given up hope. But this is no small matter. This is about protecting the American people from attacks on our homeland.

We know we have successfully protected them for almost 6 years now, since 9/11. I don't think we ought to let our guard down and assume that our enemies have gone to sleep. This is an extremely important issue. I hope at some point we will figure some way forward that gets the job done, but I do not see it at the moment, and I do not think a short-term extension will help us get there.

I yield the floor.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, one brief comment. As the Presiding Officer knows, under FISA as passed in 1978, that is in effect no matter what we do here.

Under the 1978 act, someone can go to a judge and ask that there be this information obtained. We would like it to be streamlined. We think the 1978 act should be modernized. We have been happy to work with the White House and Republicans in the Senate and House to do that. I say that in recent days we have seen signs that there is a thaw in the Republican position.

Does that mean we can get things done? I don't know. But at least people are beginning to talk a little bit and that is good. There have been some staff level discussions that have been very good too. I hope we can work together to bridge the differences between the House and Senate and do everything we can to get that done, but also understanding the 1978 FISA Act gives the President a lot of leeway to get this done anyway.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, to prolong it one more moment here, if that were adequate, we would not have passed the PROTECT America bill in the first place. Clearly, the 1978 law is not adequate to meet current chal-

lenges. There are many problems with the bill the House took up and passed and sent back over here. One is that it would require prior court approval before our intelligence professionals could monitor foreign terrorists overseas. So the House bill doesn't do anything about the problem. The Senate passed a good bill. I hope at some point the House will wake up here and do what is necessary to protect America.

In any event, the issue is not going away. The program may go away if we can't figure a way to get the job done. This is a very, very serious problem and I appreciate the good faith and attitude of the majority leader. The Senate is really not the problem here. Hopefully at some point the House will realize the best path forward.

Mr. REID. Never let it be said that I tried to get in the last word.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Senate proceed to a period of morning business with Senators permitted to speak for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

GREEK INDEPENDENCE DAY

Mr. REED. Mr. President, on March 25, 2008, we marked the 187th anniversary of Greek independence. Throughout 400 years of oppressive rule by the Ottoman Empire, the Greeks were able to maintain their language, religion, and their sense of identity. In 1821, the Greeks began an 8-year war of independence and in 1829 became the first country within the powerful Ottoman Empire to achieve its freedom. Today, Greece remains one of the oldest democracies in the world, a tribute to those brave Greek citizens who risked everything in the quest for liberty and freedom.

Our own Founding Fathers were deeply influenced by the philosophers and statesmen of ancient Greece who first imagined the idea of a republic. The United States enjoys a long history of cooperation with our Greek friends, and we owe much of our civic foundations to the Greek concept that the power to govern is vested in the people.

Throughout the 20th century, Greece has been a stalwart ally, and is one of only three countries in the world outside the British Commonwealth that has allied with the United States in every major international conflict. American and Greek soldiers have fought alongside each other in efforts to advance freedom, democracy, peace, and stability. In this century the Greece-U.S. relationship has deepened as the two countries have partnered to spread greater security, stability, and prosperity throughout the Mediterranean, Southeastern Europe, and the Caucasus. Today, Greek defense forces are deployed as part of the Inter-

national Security Assistance Forces in Afghanistan, maintain two battalions of troops in Kosovo as part of the NATO peacekeeping force, train Iraqi military officers at the Multi-National Peace Support Center, and provide logistical support to U.S. military forces throughout the Mediterranean region.

The historic friendship between Greece and the United States has been one of mutual respect and support. In history they have inspired, and in the present they enliven our great Nation. It gives me great pleasure to join my colleagues as a cosponsor of S. Res. 476 designating March 25, 2008, as "Greek Independence Day: A National Day of Celebration of Greek and American Democracy." I send all Greek Americans my best wishes as we celebrate Greece's independence and contributions to our national heritage.

NATIONAL MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. President, I urge support for S. Res. 500, which honors military children. The children of our servicemen and women in the Armed Forces have been deeply affected by the invasion in Iraq and Afghanistan. Thousands of children have lost a parent serving in Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom, and tens of thousands more must deal with the daily pressure of their parents' deployment. Military children clearly deserve our support.

Even in times of peace, these children pay a high price as they are typically required to move to many new locations several times during their formative years. The Department of Defense agrees that these multiple moves can make it more difficult for military children to do well in school, form lasting relationships with peers and adults, or cope with emotional issues ranging from loneliness to anger to depression.

In spite of all the challenges facing military children, they persevere. Children attending Department of Defense schools continue to have some of the highest test scores in the country. They rank 8th or better in all categories in comparison to the states in every national test, and they rank first or second in all categories for African-American and Hispanic students. Military children also have high school graduation and college enrollment rates significantly higher than the rest of the Nation's children. One study estimates that about 75 percent of children who graduate from high school with one or both of their parents in the military go on to college. That's significantly higher than the national average of 67 percent.

These are all accomplishments to be proud of. Military children unquestionably deserve our support, and the resolution offered by Senator BAYH recognizes them and pays tribute to their commitment, sacrifice and unconditional support for their parents and

their country. These youth are the children of our national heroes and their perseverance, patriotism and achievements make them heroes in their own right.

Despite all the obstacles they face, military children continue to succeed. I commend Senator BAYH for his leadership in offering this important resolution and urge the Senate to support it.

100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHILDREN'S HOME SOCIETY OF IDAHO

Mr. CRAIG. Mr. President, I rise today to mark the 100th anniversary of the Children's Home Society of Idaho.

For the past century this organization has served Idaho's abandoned, abused and neglected children, first as an orphanage, and now as a counseling and foster care support system. Through the efforts of this remarkable organization, tens of thousands of lives have been touched and changed for the better.

Over the past 4 years, I have become acquainted with the society's newest program, "The Bridge." This program is a partnership with the Junior League of Boise, Inc., and the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. It was created to address the crisis Idaho and the rest of the nation are facing with an abundance of children entering foster care, and a lack of homes providing the care those children so desperately need and deserve.

"The Bridge" is now helping Idaho to meet its obligation to these children by bringing the State into compliance with federal mandates and by leading the way for significant foster care reform.

As an adoptive father who is familiar with the trials and challenges of the foster care system, I commend the Children's Home Society of Idaho for its contribution to America's children and families and am honored today to mark this important milestone.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

TRIBUTE TO AMY STOUT

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today I honor a courageous and dedicated young West Virginian: Ms. Amy Stout.

Before Amy even graduated high school, she joined the National Guard to help finance her college education. Shortly after Amy started her freshman year at Wesleyan, pursuing a degree in psychology, the events of September 11 took place. Within hours of that terrible event, Amy found herself guarding the wreckage of United Flight 93, near Shanksville, PA.

Amy remained activated with the National Guard for a year, serving Stateside in the Pocono Mountains of Pennsylvania while working to complete her first semester of school.

Then, in the fall of 2002, Amy was once again activated, but this time she was sent to Camp Anaconda, north of Baghdad.

At a time when her fellow Wesleyan students were enjoying college life, Amy was serving her country as a gunner, providing security for 300-mile convoys. After her 12-month deployment, Amy returned to Wesleyan, determined to help people in as direct a way as possible. She changed her major to nursing.

Amy continued to pursue her nursing degree until, once again, the military called and Amy was sent back to Iraq, this time for 18 months. Amy's tour of duty ended on September 10, 2007, and she was back at Wesleyan the very next day, September 11, exactly 6 years after she was first activated by the National Guard.

In May 2008, Amy Stout will graduate with her nursing degree. She is a testament to the incredible bravery of our soldiers who sacrifice so much to protect this country. Her determination is an inspiration to her fellow students and her fellow West Virginians. She has served this nation with great honor and dignity and soon she will be a tremendous asset to the nursing profession.

It is with great pride that I congratulate her on her upcoming graduation and thank her for her service to this Nation.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Williams, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting sundry nominations which were referred to the appropriate committees.

(The nominations received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)

EXECUTIVE AND OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

The following communications were laid before the Senate, together with accompanying papers, reports, and documents, and were referred as indicated:

EC-5665. A communication from the Chief Financial Officer, Department of Agriculture, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Debt Management" (7 CFR Part 3) received on March 12, 2008; to the Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry.

EC-5666. A communication from the Acting General Counsel of the Department of Defense, transmitting legislative proposals for the National Defense Authorization Bill for Fiscal Year 2009; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5667. A communication from the National Executive Secretary, Navy Club of the

United States of America, transmitting, pursuant to law, the organization's national financial statement for the year ending July 31, 2007; to the Committee on Armed Services.

EC-5668. A communication from the Assistant Secretary, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting proposed legislation relative to the passenger aviation security fee; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5669. A communication from the Secretary of Agriculture, transmitting proposed legislation entitled, "The Rural Housing Section 502 Guaranteed Loans Enhancements Act of 2007"; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5670. A communication from the Attorney, Office of Assistant General Counsel for Legislation and Regulatory Law, Department of Energy, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Defense Priorities and Allocations System" (RIN1991-AB69) received on March 4, 2008; to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs.

EC-5671. A communication from the Chairman, Defense Nuclear Facilities Safety Board, transmitting, pursuant to law, a recommendation entitled, "Safety Classification of Fire Protection Systems"; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5672. A communication from the General Counsel, Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Cross-Subsidization Restrictions on Affiliate Transactions" (Docket No. RM07-15-000) received on February 26, 2008; to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

EC-5673. A communication from the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, transmitting a legislative proposal intended to implement an important new treaty for the protection of aquatic life and the marine environment; to the Committee on Environment and Public Works.

EC-5674. A communication from the Director, Office of Personnel Management, transmitting a legislative proposal entitled, "Federal Employees Short-Term Disability Security Act of 2008"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5675. A communication from the Administrator, General Services Administration, transmitting a draft bill entitled, "The General Services Enhancement Act of 2008"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5676. A communication from the Acting Chief, Border Security Regulations Branch, Department of Homeland Security, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Addition of San Antonio International Airport to List of Designated Landing Locations for Certain Aircraft" (Docket No. USCBP-2007-0017) received on March 6, 2008; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5677. A communication from the Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General, Office of Legislative Affairs, Department of Justice, transmitting, pursuant to law, a report entitled, "Federal Information Security Management Act"; to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs.

EC-5678. A communication from the Director, Office of Indian Energy and Economic Development, Department of the Interior, transmitting, pursuant to law, the report of a rule entitled "Tribal Energy Resource Agreements under the Indian Tribal Energy Development and Self-Determination Act" (RIN1076-AE80) received on March 12, 2008; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.